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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION. SOURCE GRADINGS AND DEFINITIVE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

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- Following former Prime Minister ISHIBASHI Tanzan's resignation as president of the Japan-Soviet Society (JSS), conflicting views on his successor have arisen among Japanese organizations, notably the Japan Socialist Party (JSP), Japan General Council of Trade Unions (Sohyo), and the Japan Communist Party (JCP). In the Spring of 1962, the JSP advocated the selection of OUCHI Hyoe but was opposed by both Sohyo and the JCP, which clearly supported former Tokyo University President NAMBARA Shigeru for the position. More recently, it has become apparent that the USSR wishes to see SHORIKI Matsutaro, president of the Yomiuri Shinbun, assume the post.
- Soviet desires on SHORIKI came about quite accidentally and may be traced to the March 1962 visit of Georgi Zhukov, chairman of the Soviet State Committee for Cultural Relations With Foreign Countries, to Japan. As one of his assignments during the Japan visit, Zhukov was to pick the successor to ISHIBASHI as JSS president. Zhukov first approached KAYA Seiji, president of Tokyo University, with the proposal that KAYA re-enter the society as its president. KAYA rejected the proposal and explained to Zhukov that he would not consider returning to the JSS in any capacity until the JCP showed indications of becoming more mature in its policies and activities. Because of this rejection and the apparent resistance of other notables in progressive circles, Zhukov decided to try to pick a candidate from conservative Japanese circles. A visit to the offices of the Nippon Television Company (NTV) placed Zhukov in contact with SHORIKI. Zhukov was impressed by SHORIKI and even more so by the mass communications facilities at the command of SHORIKI; namely, the Yomiuri Shinbun and NTV. Zhukov apparently recognized the influence SHORIKI could extend through these media and put out a feeler to SHORIKI on the possibility of having the latter assume the presidency of the JSS. Zhukov told SHORIKI that he was interested in finding a ministerial-level member of

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the Japanese conservative camp to fill the vacancy and felt that SHORIKI would be acceptable, but SHORIKI exhibited no particular reaction to Zhukov's request at the time.

3. When KONO Ichiro and TAKASAKI Tatsunosuke went to the USSR in April-May 1962 to discuss Japan-Soviet fishery problems, additional pressure was put on these two officials by Soviet Government officials to gain acceptance of the USSR's intention to have SHORIKI become the next JSS president. The Soviet officials expressed their plea in terms of the situation that prevailed when HATOYAMA Ichiro was first president of the JSS. Since HATOYAMA was selected for the post despite his well-known anti-communist and reactionary policies as a pre-war Education Minister, the Soviet officials indicated that it would not be awkward for SHORIKI to assume the post, even though he had past connections with such a "suppressive" organ as the Japanese national police. TAKASAKI, in particular, promised to exert what influence he could on SHORIKI but, in a post-trip talk with the latter, was rebuffed because SHORIKI felt strongly that the USSR should not be allowed to designate the leader of an internal Japanese organization. SHORIKI told TAKASAKI that, while the JSS promoted international good will, the responsibility to choose a new president evolved upon Japanese organizations and not an outside nation.
4. The USSR has, nevertheless, continued its efforts to persuade SHORIKI to accept the JSS position. Recently, a highly-placed Soviet Government official (possibly Soviet Deputy Premier Anastas Mikoyan), sent a personal letter to SHORIKI, again requesting his acceptance. As a consequence, SHORIKI consulted executives of the Yomiuri Shimbun and NTV secretly on the matter, but it appears that he has not changed his mind and has not yet accepted the offer. Soviet officials currently are pinning their hopes on KONO, who may represent a USSR "trump card" in their attempts to persuade SHORIKI. Even TAKASAKI maintains that KONO may be the key person who will cause SHORIKI to change his mind. TAKASAKI feels there is a definite chance that SHORIKI will ultimately accept the position, depending upon KONO's skill in negotiating the problem.
5. On the other hand, JSP and Sohyo leaders are somewhat displeased over the fact that they do not have a free hand in picking ISHIMASHI's successor, particularly since they are busily engaged in work intended to bring about a constitutional improvement of the JSS. Despite such displeasure, both organizations have tacitly agreed that they will not oppose SHORIKI's selection. On 4 August 1962, however, MATSUMOTO Shichiro, board chairman of the JSS, met with Sergey P. Sverdlov, Minister-Counselor of the Soviet Embassy in Tokyo, and indicated that it was not likely that SHORIKI would accept the presidency. At the same time, MATSUMOTO indicated the current views of the JSP and Sohyo on the matter.
6. Regarding SHORIKI's inclination to accept the JSS presidency, there are several factors indicating favorable disposition on his part: (a) A definite change in the slant of the Yomiuri Shimbun is noticeable -- whereas in the past the paper followed a generally anti-communist line, it now promulgates a softer line. Such recent statements as "the paper will accurately report the stand of the Soviet Union" have been published in the Yomiuri Shimbun, as though excusing a shift in the paper's policy. There is little doubt that this shift reflects the personal influence of SHORIKI.

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(b) SHORIKI's constituency is Toyama Prefecture, located on the western coast and relatively close, in trade terms, to the USSR. Toyama business interests are greatly intrigued over the possibilities of increased trade with the USSR. There are even current plans in the prefecture to import oil from Siberia and construct a large petroleum combine. SHORIKI cannot afford to disregard these moves, and his acceptance of the JSS presidency would be a political windfall with respect to his standing in the Toyama business community. (c) SHORIKI has always been a perceptive person, e.g., he was a pioneer in Japan's television and color television industry, and is quick to realize the potentialities in a given situation. SHORIKI long ago forecast eventual increased trade with the USSR and may feel assumption of the JSS position would be a timely move if Japan-USSR trade increased even more and if he is able to take even indirect credit for such an accomplishment.

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